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EFFECTS OF A SUMMER COUNSELING PROGRAM WITH POTENTIAL DROPOUTS.

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THE POTENTIAL DROPOUT WAS STUDIED IN THIS COUNSELING PROGRAM IN AN EFFORT TO LESSEN THE DROPOUT RATE. CRITERIA WERE ESTABLISHED AND SAMPLES WERE SELECTED FROM GRADES 8 THROUGH 11. AN EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUP WERE FORMED, AND DATA WERE GATHERED ON A NUMBER OF VARIABLES. THE STATISTICAL TREATMENTS USED WERE CHI-SQUARE AND THE "T" TEST FOR THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEANS. ANALYSIS INDICATED THE PROBABLE VALIDITY OF THE SELECTION PROCESS. THE FINDINGS SUGGEST THAT A SUMMER COUNSELING PROGRAM OF SHORT DURATION HAD LITTLE EFFECT UPON THE POTENTIAL DROPOUTS RETURNING AND CONTINUING IN SCHOOL. (RS)

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EFFECTS OF A SUMMER COUNSELING PROGRAM WITH POTENTIAL DROPOUTS

Cooperative Research Project No. 5-8136-2-12-1

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Problem on which the Research was Focused

A major concern of education today is the school dropout. The research conducted in this study was an effort to determine if summer counseling could reduce the dropout rate in Wyoming schools.

The director of the NEA Project on School Dropouts predicts 7.5 million dropouts in this decade in a world when by 1970 not more than five percent of all available jobs will be for the unskilled (4).

One out of three of the nation's youth drops out of school before completing high school (2).

The rate of unemployment among boys who have dropped out of school is three times higher than among high school graduates (2).

The summer months are a critical time for many potential dropouts. The President stated in his news conference on August 1, 1963, "The end of this summer of 1963 will be an especially critical time for 400,000 young Americans who, according to experience of earlier years, will not return to school when the summer is ended (3)."

The dropout rate is as high in rural as in urban areas (1). In Wyoming, a rural area, one out of every four pupils enrolled in the eighth grade does not complete high school.

In September of 1963 the Wyoming State Department of Education initiated a state-wide standardized accounting and reporting procedure for school dropouts. This was to provide valuable data for determining focal points of the dropout problem in Wyoming. Preventive programs that have been demonstrated to be effective in Wyoming are necessary in order to convince boards of education and the public in Wyoming that

potential dropouts can be retained in school. A study of this nature would be an important step in this direction. A controlled study of this nature should also prove to be of value to other schools contemplating a summer counseling program as a preventive measure.

Objectives

The general objective of this study was to determine what effects, if any, a summer counseling program had on the subsequent behavior of the following groups: (1) potential dropouts who were counseled with their parents or guardians; (2) potential dropouts who were counseled but not with their parents or guardians; and (3) potential dropouts who served as a control group and did not participate in any summer counseling. Specifically, the research will seek answers to the following questions:

1. Is there a difference in the number of potential dropouts from the three groups returning to school in September?
2. Is there a difference in the number of potential dropouts from the three groups who return to school in September and persist in school the following year?
3. Is there a difference in the grade point averages of the potential dropouts returning to school from the three groups for the school year following the summer counseling?
4. Is there a difference among the potential dropouts returning to school from the three groups in terms of a comparison of their grade point averages for the school year preceding the summer counseling

and the school year following the summer counseling?

5. Is there a difference in the attendance of the potential dropouts returning to school from the three groups for the school year following the summer counseling?

6. Is there a difference among the potential dropouts returning to school from the three groups in terms of a comparison of their attendance for the school year preceding the summer counseling and the school year following the summer counseling?

7. Is there a difference among the potential dropouts returning to school from the three groups in terms of the number of disciplinary actions for the school year following the summer counseling?

Related Research

In September, 1961, the National Education Association initiated the NEA Project on School Dropouts funded by the Ford Foundation. One purpose of this program is to encourage the development of programs which will decrease the number of dropouts (2).

Summer counseling is but one of the methods used to prevent school dropouts. In the summer of 1963, $250,000 from the Presidential Emergency Fund was granted to 63 school systems in the United States for the purpose of providing summer counseling programs to encourage dropouts and potential dropouts to return to school (3).

The United States Commissioner of Education recently reported that 51 percent of the actual or potential dropouts who were contacted, returned to school in September. Some 92.4 percent of those contacted and

who returned to school, were still in school November 1, 1963. In the 63 schools, the percent of contacts who returned varied from a low of 5.1 percent to a high of 100 percent (1).

In Wyoming, School District Number One, Laramie, in Albany County, received $600 from the Emergency Fund. Some 67.9 percent of the actual and potential dropouts who were contacted, returned to school in September. A control group was not used in this program. According to the literature, summer counseling is effective for retaining potential dropouts.

Procedures

For purposes of this study a potential dropout was a pupil who met one or more of the following criteria: (1) failing in more than one subject at the time of identification; (2) demanding the disciplinary action of school administrative officials to the point where the officials were of the opinion he may drop out; and/or (3) was, in the opinion of the guidance counselors, unlikely to return for reasons such as poor attendance, lack of interest in school, and unfavorable home conditions.

The dependent variable in this study was the summer counseling interviews conducted with the potential dropouts and their parents or guardians, and summer counseling interviews conducted with potential dropouts in the absence of their parents or guardians. The selection of the dependent variable is based upon (1) its reported value in the 1963 summer counseling program funded by the Presidential Emergency Fund; and (2) its potential value in assisting students to realize the effects of withdrawing

from school before completion of their high school education.

Population and Sample -- The population for this study consisted of 1963-1964 enrollments in grades 8, 9, 10, and 11 in three public school districts in Wyoming. They included District Number One (Cheyenne), Laramie County; District Number Four (Rock Springs), Sweetwater County; and District Number 25 (Riverton), Fremont County. The economy of the areas served by the three districts are representative of the economy in Wyoming. The districts and their primary economy are: (1) District Number One, Government and light industry; (2) District Number Four, mining; and (3) District Number 25, ranching and farming.

The sample consisted of the potential dropouts from the population. The sample in District Number One was divided to form two experimental groups and one control group. An experimental and a control group were formed from each of the samples in Districts Number 4 and 25, respectively. Groups were equated with regard to: (1) the criterion or criteria that identified the pupil as a potential dropout; (2) grades; (3) sex; (4) age; and (5) general ability. The pupils were pairwise equated for each criterion and the groups were then formed. To verify the equating, groups were checked for central tendency with regard to grades and general ability.

According to previous enrollment data, the State Department of Education estimates that approximately 16.4 percent of the pupils in grades 8 through 11 leave school during the course of a school year and summer (5).

Table I

School District, Population, Sample, Percent of Population included in this study.

District, Town, County	1963-64 Enrollment End of Year Membership By Grade 8	9	10	11	Total	Potential Dropouts included in this Study	Percent of Population
#1, Cheyenne, Laramie	1108	1128	1038	983	4257	322	7.56
#4, Rock Springs, Sweetwater	181	223	237	218	859	122	14.20
#25, Riverton, Fremont	222	231	215	176	844	120	14.20
TOTALS	1511	1582	1490	1377	5960	564	9.46

General Design -- This study was experimental in nature with the following general design:

School District Number One

Sample

Equate

Experimental I: Conduct summer counseling interviews with pupils and their parents or guardians

Control: No treatment

Experimental II: Conduct summer counseling interviews with the pupils

School District Number Four

Sample

Equate

Experimental I: Conduct summer counseling interviews with the pupils and their parents or guardians

Control: No treatment

School District Number 25

Sample

Equate

Experimental I: Conduct summer counseling interviews with the pupils and their parents or guardians

Control: No treatment

Analysis of Data and Findings

Data for each objective of this study were treated statistically and the results are as follows:

1. Is there a difference in the number of potential dropouts from the three groups returning to school in September?

Four hundred forty-six pupils returned to school in September. Of these 216 were members of the control group, 164 were counseled with their parents, and 66 were counseled without their parents. Twenty-five of the control group did not return to school, 10 of the group that were counseled with their parents did not return, and four of the group counseled without their parents did not return. Chi-square was computed and found to be 3.47, which was not significant at the .05 level.

Table II

Contingency Table for Objective One

Group	Did Not Return	Did Return	Total
Control	25	191	216
With Parents	10	154	164
Without Parents	4	62	66
TOTALS	39	407	446

2. Is there a difference in the number of potential dropouts from the three groups who persisted in school the following year?

Of the 216 pupils who were members of the control group, 40 dropped during the 1964-1965 school year. Of those in the group counseled with their parents, 132 remained in school. Fifty-three persisted in school from the group counseled without their parents throughout the 1964-1965 school year, and four dropped out. Chi-square was computed and found to be 4.78, which was not significant at the .05 level.

Table III

Contingency Table for Objective Two

Group	Dropped	Remained	Total
Control	40	176	216
With Parents	32	132	164
Without Parents	4	53	57
TOTALS	76	361	437

3. Is there a difference among the three groups of the potential dropouts who returned to school in the grade point averages earned in the school year following the summer counseling?

X_1 Control Group, 1964-1965 grade point average

X_2 With Parents Group, 1964-1965 grade point average

X_3 Without Parents Group, 1964-1965 grade point average

	N	$\bar{X}$	s^2
X_1	176	3.79	0.3352
X_2	132	3.70	0.2928
X_3	53	3.75	0.2669

$\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2 = 0.09$ t = 1.402 no significant difference at .05 level

$\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_3 = 0.04$ t = 0.481 no significant difference at .05 level

$\bar{X}_2 - \bar{X}_3 = 0.05$ t = 0.587 no significant difference at .05 level

4. Was there a difference among the three groups of potential dropouts who returned to school in terms of their grade point averages for the school year preceding the summer counseling and the school year following the summer counseling?

X_1 1963-1964 grade point average, Control Group

X_2 1964-1965 grade point average, Control Group

X_3 1963-1964 grade point average, With Parents Group

X_4 1964-1965 grade point average, With Parents Group

X_5 1963-1964 grade point average, Without Parents Group

X_6 1964-1965 grade point average, Without Parents Group

	N	$\bar{X}$	s^2
X_1	176	3.96	0.5620
X_2	176	3.79	0.3352
X_3	132	3.90	0.2610
X_4	132	3.70	0.2928
X_5	53	3.99	0.2809
X_6	53	3.75	0.2669

$\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2 = 0.17$ t = 2.38 significant .05 level

$\bar{X}_3 - \bar{X}_4 = 0.20$ t = 3.09 significant .05 level

$\bar{X}_5 - \bar{X}_6 = 0.24$ t = 2.43 significant .05 level

5. Was there a difference in the attendance of the potential dropouts who returned to school from the three groups for the school year following the summer counseling?

X_1 Number of days absent, Control Group

X_2 Number of days absent, With Parents Group

X_3 Number of days absent, Without Parents Group

	N	$\bar{X}$	s^2
X_1	53	15.02	141.48
X_2	86	17.34	23.00
X_3	161	13.19	102.47

$\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2 = -2.32$ t = -2.17 significant .05 level

$\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_3 = 1.83$ t = 1.09 no significant difference at .05 level

$\bar{X}_2 - \bar{X}_3 = 4.15$ t = 2.80 significant .05 level

6. Is there a difference among the potential dropouts returning to school from the three groups in terms of a comparison of their attendance for the school year preceding the summer counseling and the school year following the summer counseling?

X_1 Number of days absent 1963-1964, Control Group

X_2 Number of days absent 1964-1965, Control Group

X_3 Number of days absent 1963-1964, With Parents Group

X_4 Number of days absent 1964-1965, With Parents Group

X_5 Number of days absent 1963-1964, Without Parents Group

X_6 Number of days absent 1964-1965, Without Parents Group

	N	$\overline{X}$	s^2
X_1	161	11.63	96.81
X_2	161	15.02	141.48
X_3	86	16.48	91.77
X_4	86	17.34	23.00
X_5	53	10.65	91.50
X_6	53	13.19	102.47

$\overline{X}_1 - \overline{X}_2 = -3.39$ $t = -2.78$ significant .05 level

$\overline{X}_3 - \overline{X}_4 = -0.86$ $t = -0.74$ no significant difference at .05 level

$\overline{X}_5 - \overline{X}_6 = -2.54$ $t = -1.33$ no significant difference at .05 level

7. Is there a difference among the three groups of potential dropouts returning to school in terms of the number of disciplinary actions taken by the school during the school year following the summer counseling?

X_1 Number of disciplinary actions 1964-1965, Control Group

X_2 Number of disciplinary actions 1964-1965, With Parents Group

X_3 Number of disciplinary actions 1964-1965, Without Parents Group

	N	$\overline{X}$	s^2
X_1	131*	2.66	14.12
X_2	86	1.63	7.55
X_3	53	2.09	5.36

*Records were not kept on 30 pupils.

$\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2 = 1.03$ t = 1.04 no significant difference at .05 level

$\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_3 = 0.57$ t = 1.24 no significant difference at .05 level

$\bar{X}_2 - \bar{X}_3 = 0.46$ t = 0.46 no significant difference at .05 level

Conclusion and Implications

The 564 pupils of the sample were distributed as follows: 361, or 64 percent, of the sample remained in school; 80, or 14.2 percent, transferred to other schools during the course of the summer of 1964 and the school year of 1964-1965; and 123, or 21.8 percent dropped from school. No attempt was made to determine if those pupils who transferred to other schools remained in the school to which they had transferred.

The percentages associated with the pupils dropping out of school and the state-wide estimate of those pupils dropping out of school from grades 8 through 11 were treated statistically, and it was found the difference to be significant at the .05 level. This indicates the probable validity of the selection process. With this assumption in mind, the general conclusions are as follows: The findings suggest that a summer counseling program of short duration had little effect upon the potential dropouts returning and continuing in school.

In answer to the specific objectives as outlined on Page 2 and 3:

Objective 1: Is there a difference in the number of potential dropouts from the three groups returning to school in September?

Although a difference in the percentage of the pupils returning to school was in favor of the experimental groups, statistically it must

be said that the summer counseling program was not effective in influencing the potential dropouts to return to school.

Objective 2: Is there a difference in the number of potential dropouts from the three groups who persisted in school the following year?

There existed a difference in the number of pupils remaining in school, and a percentage favoring the experimental groups. Statistically the summer counseling program was not effective in influencing the potential dropouts to persist in school in the year following the summer counseling program.

Objective 3: Was there a difference in the grade point averages of the potential dropouts returning to school from the three groups for the school year following the summer counseling?

In this instance, a difference favoring the control group was found. However, statistically the summer counseling program was not effective in its influence upon the potential dropouts grade point averages among the three groups in the school year following the summer counseling program.

Objective 4: Was there a difference among the potential dropouts who returned to school from the three groups in terms of a comparison of their grade point averages for the school year preceding the summer counseling and the school year following the summer counseling?

All three groups showed a significant increase in their grade point average. A conclusion reached was that the summer counseling program had little influence upon the pupils academic success.

Objective 5: Is there a difference in the attendance of the potential dropouts returning to school from the three groups for the school year following the summer counseling?

In comparing the number of days absent with the group counseled with their parents, the absences of the control group was significant. However, the results indicate the group counseled with their parents seem to have a negative effect upon the pupils attendance for the school year following the summer counseling program.

Objective 6: Is there a difference among the potential dropouts returning to school from the three groups in terms of a comparison of their attendance for the school year preceding the summer counseling and the school year following the summer counseling?

The summer counseling program had an effect upon the attendance of the pupils in the school year following the summer counseling in that the difference in the attendance of the control group was significantly less. A difference existed in the two experimental groups showing an increase in the number of days absent. However, these differences were not significant, and could be attributed to chance.

Objective 7: Is there a difference among the potential dropouts returning to school from the three groups in terms of the number of disciplinary actions for the school year following the summer counseling?

Some differences were noted in the number of disciplinary actions for the school year following the summer counseling, the control group having the largest number of disciplinary actions. However, no significant differences were found.

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